

Org2.8 Disaster and Emergency Management

Purpose

1. To clearly outline SAVVY's approach to disaster and emergency management and procedures for responding to an emergency. Emergency and disaster management includes planning that ensures that the risks to the health, safety and wellbeing of participants that may arise in an emergency or disaster are considered and mitigated, and ensures the continuity of supports critical to the health, safety and wellbeing of participants in an emergency or disaster.

Alignment with Practice Standards

1. Module 2: Provider Governance and Operational Management

Legislative Alignment

1. Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)
2. Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Cth)
3. Safe Work Australia

Key Responsible Executive

Chief Executive Officer

For More Support

Your People Manager

Policy Statement

1. SAVVY recognises the need to have emergency control structure and directions, which will prevent injury to service users, staff, volunteers, visitors, students, contractors and neighbouring people/premises in the event of an emergency.
2. Disasters and emergencies in the workplace can affect people physically and psychologically and disrupt program delivery continuity.
3. SAVVY identifies, prevents and manages disaster and emergency situations within its sphere of responsibility and influence, until the arrival of appropriate emergency services. This approach to disaster and emergency management is illustrated in Figure 1 on the following page.

4. A range of disaster and emergency situations may occur on the premises with the potential to impact on safety of staff, Board, volunteers, students, visitors and service users including:
 - a. Fire
 - b. Gas or water leak
 - c. Vehicle accident
 - d. Chemical, radiation or biological spill
 - e. Bushfire
 - f. Storm
 - g. Earthquake
 - h. Bomb threat
 - i. Civil; disorder or illegal occupancy
 - j. Hostage or terrorist situation
 - k. Physical (including sexual) assault
 - l. Infectious disease outbreak/pandemic

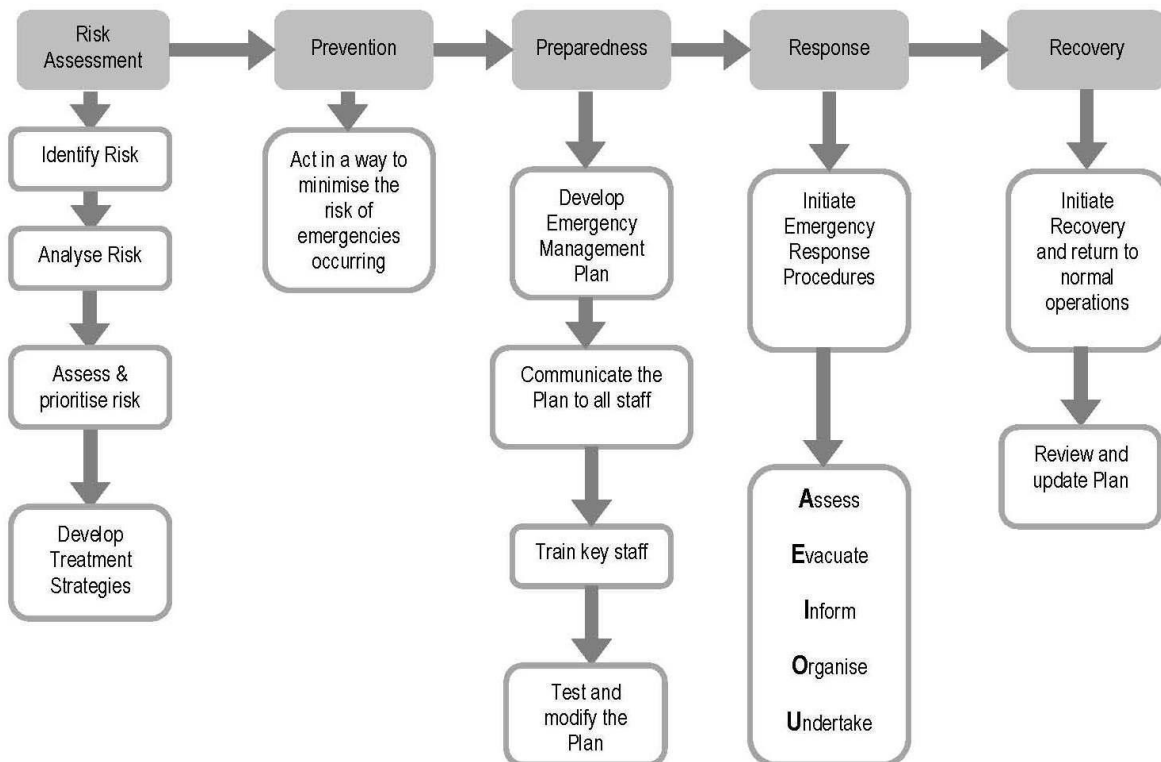
Definitions

1. Disaster - a condition or situation of significant destruction, disruption and/or distress to a community.
2. Emergency management - the coordination of an emergency response and management of recovery. The aim of emergency management is to minimise physical and psychological impacts on all parties and to minimise damage to assets, operations, reputation and staff productivity.
3. Emergencies - an unplanned or imminent event that affects or threatens the health, safety or welfare of people, property and infrastructure, and which requires a significant and coordinated response. The defining characteristic of an emergency event or situation is that usual resources are overwhelmed or have the potential to be overwhelmed. Emergencies may be a specific event with a clear beginning, end and recovery process, or a situation that develops over time and where the implications are gradual rather than immediate. Emergencies could include events such as:
 - a. Fire or explosions
 - b. Serious injuries, bites, poisonings or other medical emergencies
 - c. Emergency as a result of environmental conditions (e.g., heat, cold, wet, snow, wind, lightning, bushfires, floods, high seas and cyclones)
 - d. Hazardous substances and chemical spills or gas leaks, and
 - e. Bomb threats, robberies, shootings, hostage situations or terrorism.
4. Fire Wardens - a person nominated to assist in the clearing of a specified area in the event of an emergency evacuation.
5. PPE - Personal Protective Equipment.
6. Supervisors - this term will be used to include Executive Officer and SAVVY's coordinators and supervisors.
7. Workplace emergency - an unforeseen situation that threatens employees, service users or the public. An emergency may be natural or manmade, and may disrupt or shut down operations.

Delegations

Roles	Responsibilities
Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor WHS risk management strategies, incidents and injuries
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead and implement WHS Framework including this procedure Manage and monitor compliance with all WHS policies and procedures Ensure staff are provided with relevant training in disaster and emergency management Receive and respond to Emergency Management reports
Staff, volunteers, contractors and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the development of disaster and emergency procedures / plans and comply with them

Figure One - Emergency and disaster approach



Procedures

1. Risk assessment

- a. SAVVY uses risk assessment processes to identify and control barriers to effective emergency management.
- b. Staff, Board, students, volunteers, and service users are expected to behave in a way to minimise the risk of emergencies occurring.
- c. Where possible, participants and their support networks will be consulted about emergency and disaster plans put in place.

2. Preparedness

- a. The list of potential emergency situations (see Policy Statement) and disaster and emergency plans are reviewed annually. SAVVY will also review these in the event of a disaster or emergency situation. Plans are in place to identify, source and induct a workforce in the event that workforce disruptions occur in an emergency or disaster.
- b. All Board members, staff, volunteers and students are trained in disaster and emergency response procedures at induction and annually to ensure they are familiar with implementing disaster and emergency management plans.
- c. All staff, Board members, students and volunteers familiarise themselves with emergency evacuation procedures, including their responsibilities and the emergency evacuation assembly point.
- d. Emergency evacuation drills are undertaken in all sites quarterly under the instruction of the CEO.
- e. All fire safety activities undertaken by SAVVY are recorded and reviewed to identify gaps in training, knowledge, equipment or processes. Fire activities include, but are not limited to, fire safety training, drills and exercises, records of maintenance and inventories of equipment kept.
- f. SAVVY staff with capabilities that are relevant to assisting in the response to an emergency or disaster (such as contingency planning or infection prevention or control) are to be identified and assigned where required. Training will also be provided to implement emergency and disaster plans.
- g. Infection prevention and control training and the use of PPE, including refresher training, is undertaken by all workers involved in providing supports to participants.

3. Responding to an emergency

- a. When a disaster or emergency situation arises, the primary aim of the response is to ensure the safety of all people on the premises, preserve life and protect property.
- b. The R.A.C.E acronym has been adopted as the standard emergency message and response for all SAVVY workers, as it is applicable in many emergency situations.

R	RESCUE	Any persons in immediate danger if safe to do so
A	ALARM	Raise the alarm/alert others, contact emergency services by telephoning. 000, in case of fire activate alarm
C	CONTAIN	Close doors to contain fire and secure the area
E	EXTINGUISH / EVACUATE	Attempt to extinguish fire only if trained and if safe to do so. Evacuate premises.

- c. Alternative arrangements for the continuity of supports for each participant are to be considered, where changes or interruptions are unavoidable and support is safe to do so. These changes will be:
 - i. explained and agreed with the participant; and
 - ii. delivered in a way that is appropriate to their needs, preferences and goals.
 - d. In the event of an emergency or disaster, each participant should access support in a safe environment that is appropriate to their needs. Measures for this include:
 - i. using and identifying staff familiar to the participant where possible.
 - ii. undertaking work with other providers (including health care and allied health providers and providers of other services) to identify and manage risks to participants and to correctly interpret their needs and preferences.
 - iii. for participants with communication needs, having clear arrangements in place to support them to understand and express emerging health concerns.
 - iv. routine environmental cleaning is conducted in settings in which supports are provided to participants (other than their homes), particularly of frequently touched surfaces.
 - v. PPE is available to SAVVY workers, and SAVVY participants who require it.
4. Fire management
- a. In the event of a fire, fire safety equipment is to be used to extinguish the fire if safe to do so. If it is unsafe to use fire safety equipment, emergency evacuation procedures are implemented.
 - b. The fire warden or in their absence a collectively agreed other lead person ensures that emergency services are contacted by phoning 000.
 - c. All fires should be attended by fire emergency services, regardless of the size, extent or damage of the fire as there may be further risks which emergency services can identify and assess.
5. Raising the alarm
- a. An employee who discovers an emergency (i.e. fire, gas leak etc.) should:
 - i. Rescue any person in immediate danger if it is safe to do so
 - ii. Do not attempt to combat the fire – this should be left to professionally trained people
 - iii. Contact the Fire Warden or SAVVY's Executive Manager and ask them to:
 - Activate the alarm system
 - Call emergency service by telephoning 000
 - Advise the fire warden
 - Evacuate to the assembly point
6. Evacuation
- a. Where an emergency alert or alarm is given that requires evacuation of the building (i.e. fire, explosion, bomb threat, natural disaster), all persons are to leave SAVVY premises in a prompt and calm manner via the emergency stairs. In an emergency evacuation, do not use building lifts.
 - b. The Fire Warden is responsible for providing direction and facilitating safe evacuation of all persons. The Fire Warden must collect the Visitor Register/appointment book and ensure all persons evacuate the building and meet at the designated emergency assembly site. Where

the Fire Warden is not available, a senior staff member or other suitable person is to identify themselves as the person responsible for leading the emergency response.

- c. All persons are to follow instructions of the identified emergency response leader and emergency services personnel.
- d. Mobility impaired persons are supported by other persons to safely evacuate the premises. Mobility impaired persons who are in immediate danger and cannot safely evacuate the premises are moved to a safe place. A safe place may be inside a fire isolated fire stair, or into another section of the building, closing doors between the person and the fire, however still on an exit route.
- e. Staff members are responsible for ensuring that visitors are escorted to the emergency assembly site.
- f. If a person is trapped in the building, no person is to re-enter the premises unless it is completely safe to do so and permission is given by the iAccelerate Manager. If it is unsafe to re-enter the premises, inform emergency services on their arrival for them to assess and respond to the situation.
- g. No person is to re-enter the premises while the fire alarm is sounding or until clearance is given by emergency services.

7. Evacuation Procedures for fire warden(s)

- a. When notified of a fire, the Fire Warden(s) should ascertain whether the person who discovered the fire has called the Fire Brigade. If not, the Fire Warden(s), depending on the reported seriousness of the situation, should do so whilst commencing the evacuation of the building.
- b. The evacuation of the building is achieved by firstly notifying any other Fire Warden(s) of the situation. The Fire Warden(s) then quickly walk around the building and instruct all people present to leave the building immediately and move to the assembly point. Staff should not be offered any explanations. Care should be taken to notify staff in areas not part of the main building (e.g. basements, toilets, storage areas).
- c. The Fire Warden(s) should ensure that every room, including the toilets have been checked for occupants. The doors of each room should be closed once vacated.
- d. To ensure that Fire Warden(s) do not unnecessarily risk their own lives or the lives of others, the following procedures must be adhered to:
 - i. Any person refusing to leave the building is to be left in the building.
 - ii. If a person has a disability that is likely to slow the exit of remaining people from the building, the disabled person must be the last to leave the building with the fire warden(s).
 - iii. If it is difficult to reach a person without risking a life, then that person must be left in the building for the Fire Brigade to rescue.
 - iv. Fire Warden(s) should be the last to leave the building and move to the Assembly Point. At the Assembly Point a list of names will be taken and staff will be asked to account for any missing persons.
 - v. The decision to switch off the electricity supply should be taken by emergency services.

8. Emergency exits

- a. Emergency exits will be clearly labelled and all staff and volunteers are required to familiarise themselves with the Evacuation Plan displayed on the walls.

9. Evacuation assembly site
 - a. Following evacuation from SAVVY premises, all persons are to assemble at the designated emergency assembly site.
 - b. The emergency assembly site is clearly labelled on the Evacuation Plan.
 - c. All persons are to remain at the designated emergency assembly site until given clearance to return to SAVVY premises or other directions by the Fire Warden and emergency services personnel.

10. Communication with emergency services
 - a. The person responsible for leading the emergency response is the primary contact for emergency services personnel. Upon arrival of the emergency services, they are to be informed of the emergency circumstances, including if any persons remain in the building/office.

11. Emergency evacuation drills
 - a. The Fire Warden conducts emergency evacuation drills at a minimum of once per year. All persons in the premises at the time of the drill are to respond as if in a true emergency evacuation.
 - b. A record of the emergency evacuation drill is made using the Emergency Evacuation Report, which identifies details of the evacuation and where further safety actions are required. The Emergency Evacuation Report is also used to record evacuation details following a true emergency evacuation.
 - c. Emergency evacuation reports are filed in the Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) file and discussed at the next scheduled staff meeting.

12. Emergency response review
 - a. Following an emergency situation, the Fire Warden and CEO are to review the emergency event with the view of identifying and implementing improvements in overall workplace health and safety and emergency management. The report is to be forwarded to the Board for consideration.

References to other SAVVY policies and external sources

1. Org 2.6 Incident and Hazard Management
2. WHS 1.1 Work Health and Safety
3. WHS 2.2 Infection and Control
4. WHS 2.3 Hazardous Substances

Summary of attachments

1. Nil

Version Control

1. 1 April 2023 - New Policy Creation